

PASSES INTO HISTORY.

During Past Twenty-Five Years Dispensary System Had Many Changes.

The question of the abolition of the whiskey traffic in South Carolina began to be agitated soon after the redemption of the state under General Hampton in 1876, but this early agitation was for local action in a few scattered counties. Special acts of the general assembly were introduced and passed permitting "wet" and "dry" elections for Anderson, Orangeburg, Laurens and other counties. The contest between the prohibitionists and license men in some of these counties was heated. In none of them which succeeded in voting out the licensed saloons was prohibition successfully enforced in those days and after a few years most of them returned to the licensed saloon system.

In the legislature of 1890 a bill for State-wide prohibition, introduced by the late L. D. Childs, of Richland county, developed great strength and narrowly failed of passage. This was the period of intense factional division between the "Tillmanites" and the "anti-Tillmanites" and both factions included numbers of men on both sides of the liquor question. Neither faction, as such, was willing to take a stand on either side of the question. In 1892 when the contest for governor was between B. K. Tillman and John C. Sheppard, the State Democratic executive committee consented that in each precinct a separate box should be placed in which the people at the primary election might vote as between prohibition and licensed saloons. The total vote cast for governor at this election was a little less than 88,000 and the vote on the whiskey question totaled a little more than 70,000. The prohibitionists won in the referendum by about 10,000, the vote for license being about 30,000 and that for prohibition about 40,000. When the result became known it was taken for granted that the legislature would enact the Childs bill or one similar to it. Mr. Childs did not return to the legislature and the new prohibition bill was introduced by Mr. Roper, when the legislature met in November. The Tillmanites or "Reformers" had overwhelming majorities in both houses. The leaders of their faction were afraid of prohibition. They apprehended that it might, if enacted, cause an increase of taxation and in other ways divide the Tillman forces. The Roper bill was, however, promptly passed by the house. In the senate a number of bills bearing on the whiskey traffic were introduced and at one time it seemed as though the subject would be so confused in that body that no legislation would result. Gov. Tillman already had taken the position that the profits of the saloons, which hitherto had gone entirely into the town treasuries, should be divided with the counties, so that the rural section might share in them. Marlboro county at this time was dry, as it had been since a day preceding the War between the Sections, and there may have been one or two other dry counties.

As the end of the session of the general assembly approached the dispensary bill was introduced by Senator John Gary Evans, then of Aiken. The dispensary system, modelled upon the Gothenburg system of Norway, was already in operation in Athens, Ga. T. Larry Gantt, then editor of the Columbia Register, had lately come to South Carolina from Athens, and it was said that he suggested the Athens plan to Gov. Tillman. At any rate Gov. Tillman became enamored of the scheme. When the bill was introduced in the senate no one took it seriously except those of the inner councils of the "Reformers," but it was said that the reform members of the general assembly, or some of them, held a caucus and decided that it should be enacted. The measure came up in the senate for discussion at a time so close to the day fixed for adjournment that it was impracticable to give it three readings in both houses. The prohibition bill already passed by the house had come over to the senate and the senate dispensary bill was then moved as an amendment to it, only the title of the house bill being retained. After strenuous opposition and a filibuster by the seven anti-Tillmanite senators the bill was passed, three of those aligned with the reform faction voting against it. One of these three was D. E. Finley, senator from York and now representative in congress. The new law included the essential principles of the present dispensary system. It was passed in December, 1892, and took effect July 1, 1893. It provided for the establishment of a State wholesale dispensary and sub-dispensaries in all the counties except Marlboro, which the late Senator W. D. Evans, of that county, by resolute efforts, succeeded in causing to be exempted.

The constitutionality of the law was attacked in the State courts.

Opposition to the law was intense throughout the State, but it was generally and firmly supported by Senator Tillman's faction, who were a decided majority of the people. In the spring of 1894 occurred the "Darlington war," as it was popularly called, which resulted in the killing and wounding of three or four men of both factions, resulting in the proclamation by the governor that the counties of Darlington and Florence were in a state of insurrection. About a month later the supreme court of the State, then composed of Justices Simpson, McGowan and Pope, declared the law unconstitutional. Mr. Pope dissented. For some weeks following whiskey was retailed freely without license as there was no license law in existence and the dispensary law had been held null and void. In August the personnel of the supreme court was changed, a new test case was brought and the former decision was reversed. The dispensary system was again in force. At the session of the legislature of 1893 and at subsequent sessions the law underwent various changes, the essential regulative methods of selling intoxicants being retained. In 1895 the constitutional convention incorporated the dispensary plan in the organic law of the State in a clause which Senator Tillman has said that he wrote.

In 1905 the Brice law, introduced by Senator J. Steele Brice, of York, was enacted which permitted county option as between dispensaries and prohibition, and very soon the dispensaries were voted out of numbers of counties, especially in the Piedmont section. This was the beginning of the downfall of the State dispensary.

In 1905 and 1906 an investigation of the system was undertaken by a committee of the legislature and it resulted in unearthing far-reaching scandals and frauds in the State's liquor business, long suspected and alleged, but not hitherto proved. Endeavors were made to tighten the law and eliminate possibilities of fraud, but the legislature did not succeed. In 1906 M. F. Ansel, of Greenville, was elected governor on an anti-State dispensary platform and a general assembly in sympathy with this idea was elected with him. The legislature in 1907 abolished the State dispensary and substituted the county dispensary system by what is known as the Carey-Cothran law. In August, 1909, the 21 counties having dispensaries, by order of the legislature, held referendums as to their abolition or retention and all the counties except six voted "dry." Since then about nine counties have voted in county dispensaries.

The action of the legislature of 1915 submitted a State-wide prohibition law to a State referendum which resulted in an election in September, 1915, in accepting the law. The State-wide prohibition of the liquor traffic which begins today is in accordance with that act and referendum.—Columbia State, of January 1.

Didn't Get By.

Among the passengers on a train on a one-track road in the middle West was a talkative jewelry drummer.

Presently the train stopped to take on water, and the conductor neglected to send back a flagman. An express came along, and, before it could be stopped, bumped the rear end of the first train.

The drummer was lifted from his seat and pitched head first into the seat ahead. His silk hat was jammed clear down over his ears.

He picked himself up and settled back in his seat. No bones had been broken. He drew a long breath, straightened up and said:

"Well, they didn't get by us, anyway."

She Had a Right to Go.

Visiting New York friends is an Illinois girl, young and sweet and pretty. One evening she was out with a party of people older than herself, and after the theatre some one suggested that they go to a rather lively restaurant and dance a while. The others objected on the ground that it might not be the proper place for a young and unsophisticated girl like Miss Blank.

"Oh," she said with quite an air, "you needn't bother about my youth or my unsophistication. I am 21 years of age and I voted at the November election."

No other woman in the party had a record like that, and the Illinois girl was taken along without further question.

Duly Elected.

An aged negro parson in the South addressed the congregation thus:

"Bredren, de time a heah fo' 'lection ob de pastah fo' dis church. All dose favorin' me fo' pastah please say 'aye.'"

"Ha! Silence means consent," says he, "so I'm yo' pastah fo' another yeah."

WILD RIDE UPON ELEPHANT.

Woman Had Exciting Time on Frightened Animal.

New York, Jan. 22.—The story of a woman's wild ride on the back of a frightened elephant is related in a suit for \$20,000 damages brought by Mrs. Willie Gee against the New York Zoological society, under whose care the elephant was kept in Bronx park.

One of the interesting details of the suit is that Mrs. Gee alleges the Zoological society used the elephant as a "common carrier" for carrying passengers for pay. She charges that it was the duty of the society to provide her with a safe place to ride on and that the elephant should have been docile.

Instead, she says, she was sitting on the elephant's back when the animal began to run around the enclosure and then made a dash for the doorway into the elephant house. Employees of the park called out to her to jump off the elephant's back and she did so just in time to dodge the door casing as the elephant went through the doorway. In the fall Mrs. Gee avers she suffered injuries for which she seeks \$20,000 damages.

To the Liberty Bell.

Dr. MacDonald, the eminent editor of the Toronto Globe, in his Panama exposition address, paid this tribute to our "Liberty Bell":

"In this great exposition, that has gathered so much of the wonder and wealth of the world, there is no object of greater historical interest or of profounder international veneration than that focal point of attraction in the Pennsylvania building, where the flowers are always fresh and the crowds are always large—the Liberty Bell.

"On this journey across the continent from Independence hall, in Philadelphia, the Liberty Bell of this American republic was greeted at every point with the high and reverent acclaim of all the people. It was as when in the days of Israel's renaissance the Ark of the Covenant was brought up, with sacrificial hand and grateful praise, from the house of Obed-edom to the sanctuary and meeting place of the tribe. So now at this place of convocation for all the world, on the shore of the western sea, fronting the Golden Gate, the Liberty Bell is again set up. Around it press, day after day, unnumbered citizens, not of this nation alone, but of all nations. They stand with uncovered heads as in the presence of this nation's history. They read its date, 1776, and hear again the Declaration of Independence.

"The Liberty Bell is in very truth the Ark of the Covenant; the symbol and the seal of America's covenant with the God of nations; the pledge, America's pledge, to all the world that this republic, from sea to sea, for all time and over all the world, shall stand for liberty, not even for itself alone, but for the liberty of every people, the defender of the innocent weak against the arrogant strong, the advocate and guardian of liberty and justice and honor for all humanity. So long as the people of this republic keep inviolate the pledge of liberty so long will the Liberty Bell represent without rebuke the Ark of the Covenant for this American nation.

"And not for Americans alone. The Liberty Bell means too much, its history runs too far back, its message rings too wide, for its meaning to be closed in by any national boundaries or under national flag. I stand here, in this 'Court of the Universe,' under the stars and stripes, a citizen of Canada. The flag of my allegiance is of an empire that belts the world. And, in the name of all who speak the language Shakespeare spoke, I claim a share in the veneration paid the Liberty Bell.

"The metal of that bell was brought from far beyond the sea. Into it was burned the molten history of London for more than a thousand years. The note of its liberty was struck more than fifteen centuries ago by the primitive Anglo-Saxons in the dark forests of Northern Germany and around the mouth of the Elbe. The voice of the Liberty Bell is the strong voice of Anglo-American democracy.

"Through all the centuries of the English speech that voice of liberty and democracy has sounded over all the hard cries of despotism and mastery. It was heard at Runnymede. It ordered the crown from the head of more than one king. It spoke through Hampden and Pym long before it touched the lips of Washington and Jefferson.

"As in the day when the Liberty Bell first rang out the Declaration of Independence, so today the voice of Anglo-American democracy, through the two English-speaking nations of North America, declares again and to all the world, that any people anywhere who desire to be free and who are fit to be free shall be given freedom's unfettered chance."

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